

# University of Central Florida (UCF) FIL2030 History of Motion Pictures Practice Exam 1 (Sample)

Study Guide



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## Questions

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1. In what year did the Motion Picture Production Code, or Hays Code, begin to be strictly enforced?
  - A. 1927
  - B. 1934
  - C. 1945
  - D. 1960
2. What genre is characterized by stories focusing on realistic portrayals of life and everyday events?
  - A. Fantasy
  - B. Drama
  - C. Thriller
  - D. Horror
3. Who directed the 1939 classic film "Gone with the Wind"?
  - A. Victor Fleming
  - B. George Cukor
  - C. Frank Capra
  - D. John Ford
4. Which director is credited with the introduction of continuity editing?
  - A. D.W. Griffith
  - B. Alfred Hitchcock
  - C. Charlie Chaplin
  - D. Orson Welles
5. Who is considered one of the pioneers of documentary filmmaking?
  - A. George Melies
  - B. Robert Flaherty
  - C. D.W. Griffith
  - D. John Grierson

6. Who was the first female director to gain notoriety in American cinema?
- A. Frances Marion
  - B. Mary Pickford
  - C. Alice Guy-Blaché
  - D. Lois Weber
7. What year is commonly associated with the invention of motion pictures?
- A. 1891
  - B. 1903
  - C. 1927
  - D. 1895
8. What type of film includes exaggerated violence and often operates outside conventional societal norms?
- A. Exploitation Film
  - B. Art House Film
  - C. Documentary Film
  - D. Historical Drama
9. What pioneering role did Gance hold in filmmaking?
- A. The first director to use sound
  - B. The first combat director
  - C. The first to use color film
  - D. The first advocate for censorship reform
10. What is the significance of the phrase "the personal is political" in filmmaking?
- A. It distinguishes personal and artistic expression
  - B. It emphasizes how personal experiences relate to broader social and political issues
  - C. It represents the conflict between individual and state
  - D. It underscores the importance of political correctness in cinema

## Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. A
4. A
5. B
6. C
7. A
8. A
9. B
10. B

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## Explanations

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1. In what year did the Motion Picture Production Code, or Hays Code, begin to be strictly enforced?

A. 1927

B. 1934

C. 1945

D. 1960

The Motion Picture Production Code, commonly known as the Hays Code, began to be strictly enforced in 1934. This year marked a significant turning point in the regulation of American films, as the industry faced increased public scrutiny and pressure from various social and moral groups advocating for more responsible content. By 1934, the code had been established to provide a set of guidelines for filmmakers to follow, which aimed to prevent the depiction of inappropriate content that could be deemed offensive or morally questionable. The enforcement became more rigorous as the Production Code Administration (PCA) was created, leading to the requirement that films be submitted for approval before release. This strict enforcement helped shape the narratives, themes, and visuals portrayed in movies throughout the 1930s and beyond, directly influencing the evolution of the film industry. This context is crucial for understanding the impact of the Hays Code on the films produced during this time period, leading to a lasting legacy on film storytelling.

2. What genre is characterized by stories focusing on realistic portrayals of life and everyday events?

A. Fantasy

B. Drama

C. Thriller

D. Horror

The genre that is characterized by stories focusing on realistic portrayals of life and everyday events is drama. Drama often centers around the complexities of human emotions, relationships, and life situations, reflecting real-life struggles and experiences. This genre allows for deep character development and often tackles serious themes, making the narratives relatable to the audience. In contrast, fantasy involves elements that are imaginative and not grounded in reality, such as magical worlds or supernatural beings. Thrillers typically revolve around suspenseful and exciting situations, often incorporating crime or psychological tension, which diverts from everyday realism. Horror, on the other hand, aims to evoke fear and anxiety through supernatural or gruesome elements, moving even further from realistic portrayals of life. Thus, drama distinctly stands out as it embraces the authentic and often challenging aspects of human existence.

### 3. Who directed the 1939 classic film "Gone with the Wind"?

A. Victor Fleming

B. George Cukor

C. Frank Capra

D. John Ford

The director of the 1939 classic film "Gone with the Wind" is Victor Fleming. He is credited with bringing to life this epic tale set against the backdrop of the American Civil War and Reconstruction. Fleming's direction is notable for its grand visual storytelling, which was innovative at the time and helped define the look of cinema in the late 1930s. His work on "Gone with the Wind" showcases his ability to handle large-scale productions and elaborate set pieces, which contributed to the film's sweeping narrative and emotional depth. This iconic film, known for its complex characters and dramatic themes, became a monumental success and remains a significant part of cinematic history. Other directors listed, such as George Cukor, were involved in the film's production in other capacities. Cukor initially directed some scenes before Fleming took over. Frank Capra and John Ford are notable directors in their own right, known for different styles and films, but they did not direct "Gone with the Wind." Thus, Victor Fleming's directorial role is affirmed as crucial to the film's legacy.

### 4. Which director is credited with the introduction of continuity editing?

A. D.W. Griffith

B. Alfred Hitchcock

C. Charlie Chaplin

D. Orson Welles

D.W. Griffith is recognized for his pioneering work in early cinema, particularly in the development of narrative film techniques, including continuity editing. This editing style focuses on creating a seamless flow from one shot to another, maintaining the illusion of continuous time and space, which helps viewers follow the story without confusion. Griffith's film "The Birth of a Nation" is often cited as a significant example where he effectively utilized these techniques, such as shot/reverse shot setups and the 180-degree rule, to create a cohesive narrative. His innovations in editing laid the foundation for modern filmmaking practices, making him a crucial figure in this aspect of film history. While other directors like Alfred Hitchcock and Orson Welles made significant contributions to cinematic techniques, their work focused on other elements of storytelling and visual style rather than the establishment of continuity editing as Griffith did. Charlie Chaplin, known for his comedic films, also contributed to the art of cinema but did not primarily focus on continuity editing as a formal innovation in the same way Griffith did.

5. Who is considered one of the pioneers of documentary filmmaking?

- A. George Melies
- B. Robert Flaherty
- C. D.W. Griffith
- D. John Grierson

Robert Flaherty is recognized as one of the pioneers of documentary filmmaking due to his innovative approaches and contributions to the genre. His work in the early 20th century, particularly with the film "Nanook of the North" (1922), is often credited as one of the first feature-length documentaries. Flaherty's focus on capturing real life, his use of non-professional actors, and his storytelling techniques helped to establish the documentary as a legitimate and impactful form of cinema. Flaherty's emphasis on authenticity and the portrayal of real people in their natural environments set a precedent for future documentary filmmakers. His methods influenced the development of the genre by blending artistic storytelling with a commitment to factual representation, which remains a hallmark of documentary filmmaking today. Consequently, his legacy is foundational, making him a central figure in the history of the documentary form.

6. Who was the first female director to gain notoriety in American cinema?

- A. Frances Marion
- B. Mary Pickford
- C. Alice Guy-Blaché
- D. Lois Weber

Alice Guy-Blaché is recognized as the first female director to gain notoriety in American cinema. She began her career in the late 19th century and was a pioneering figure in the film industry. Guy-Blaché directed one of the earliest narrative films and went on to establish her own production company, making significant contributions to the development of film techniques and storytelling. Her work paved the way for future female filmmakers and showcased that women could take on crucial creative roles in a male-dominated industry. Frances Marion, while a highly regarded screenwriter and director, achieved prominence later, primarily in the silent and early sound eras but is not credited as the first female director. Mary Pickford is known for her acting and producing work in early Hollywood but did not direct films herself. Lois Weber was indeed a talented director and is known for her innovative approaches in filmmaking, but she followed in the wake of Guy-Blaché's earlier contributions and reputation. Thus, Alice Guy-Blaché's status as the first female director distinguishes her as an important figure in the history of American cinema.

7. What year is commonly associated with the invention of motion pictures?

A. 1891

B. 1903

C. 1927

D. 1895

The year commonly associated with the invention of motion pictures is 1895. In that year, the Lumière brothers showcased their cinematograph in Paris, marking a pivotal moment in film history as it allowed for the projection of moving images to an audience. This event is often considered the birth of cinema as a public exhibition medium. While 1891 is an important year as well, particularly with the development of devices like Thomas Edison's Kinetoscope, it didn't lead to a public exhibition of moving images. The other years mentioned—1903 and 1927—are more significant for specific advancements in film, such as narrative storytelling and the introduction of synchronized sound, but they do not represent the initial invention of motion pictures. Therefore, 1895 holds the crucial significance in establishing motion pictures as we recognize them today.

8. What type of film includes exaggerated violence and often operates outside conventional societal norms?

A. Exploitation Film

B. Art House Film

C. Documentary Film

D. Historical Drama

Exploitation films are characterized by their sensationalism and often feature exaggerated violence, graphic content, or risqué themes that aim to shock or provoke. This genre typically operates outside of conventional societal norms, deliberately pushing boundaries to attract an audience seeking unconventional experiences or controversial topics. By focusing on elements that are often considered taboo or inappropriate, exploitation films challenge societal expectations and often reflect the cultural tensions of their times. These films frequently prioritize entertainment value over narrative depth, relying on unique marketing strategies that promise provocative content. This is distinct from art house films, which tend to emphasize artistic expression and character development, or documentary films that aim to depict reality, and historical dramas that focus on narrative storytelling rooted in factual or fictional historical contexts. Each of these other genres occupies a different space in the film landscape, often adhering to societal norms rather than subverting them in the way exploitation films do.

9. What pioneering role did Gance hold in filmmaking?

- A. The first director to use sound
- B. The first combat director
- C. The first to use color film
- D. The first advocate for censorship reform

The pioneering role that Gance held in filmmaking is primarily recognized in connection with innovative filmmaking techniques, particularly his impactful work in the silent film era. However, the most significant aspect of Gance's contributions is his work with the multi-screen experience and his innovative use of camera techniques, especially in his film "Napoleon." This film showcased advanced editing and visual techniques that allowed for a form of storytelling that was more dynamic and engaging than had been seen before. While Gance's experimentation may relate loosely to the idea of a "combat director" through his action-driven narratives, it is more accurate to highlight his role as a filmmaker who pushed the boundaries of the cinematic experience rather than fitting neatly into a specific category such as "combat director." His contributions laid the groundwork for future advancements in the film industry, influencing how films are made and experienced. The incorrect options highlight different facets of film history. The first director to use sound is most commonly credited to other filmmakers in the late 1920s, the use of color film predates Gance and is attributed to various developments in the early 20th century, and the advocacy for censorship reform involved multiple figures rather than any one individual being the first advocate. Thus, while Gance did hold a

10. What is the significance of the phrase "the personal is political" in filmmaking?

- A. It distinguishes personal and artistic expression
- B. It emphasizes how personal experiences relate to broader social and political issues
- C. It represents the conflict between individual and state
- D. It underscores the importance of political correctness in cinema

The phrase "the personal is political" signifies the relationship between individual experiences and larger societal contexts, particularly in filmmaking. This concept highlights how filmmakers can convey personal narratives that reflect and critique broader social dynamics, ideologies, and injustices. By sharing their personal stories, filmmakers can evoke empathy and awareness around issues such as gender, race, class, and identity, demonstrating that personal experiences are not isolated but rather intertwined with systemic problems. This phrase often comes into play in movements such as feminist filmmaking, where personal stories expose and challenge patriarchal structures. By elevating personal narratives to a political platform, filmmakers encourage audiences to recognize the interconnectedness of their individual stories and the societal frameworks that shape them. Thus, through cinema, personal experiences become a medium for political commentary, fostering greater social awareness and engagement.